



NEWS RELEASE

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MARCH 16, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORMER IRS EMPLOYEE SENTENCED FOR STEALING TAXPAYER CHECKS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Warsaw, Mo., woman was sentenced in federal court today for stealing checks and money orders that had been sent by taxpayers to the Internal Revenue Service in payment of federal income taxes.

Shawnda Schmidt, 30, of Warsaw, Mo., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Fernando J. Gaitan this morning to one year in federal prison without parole. The court also ordered **Schmidt** to pay \$41,677 in restitution.

On Dec. 8, 2005, **Schmidt** pleaded guilty to theft of government property. **Schmidt**, who was employed as a mail clerk for the IRS between January and April 2003, admitted that she removed checks or money orders, which has been sent by taxpayers, from the mail room. The checks and money orders were originally payable to the IRS, but **Schmidt** changed the name of the payee so that others could deposit the checks or money orders into their accounts or so that others could cash the checks or money orders. The total amount of checks or money orders which **Schmidt** caused to be deposited or cashed was approximately \$41,677, including 24 stolen checks and money orders totaling \$12,012 that she cashed herself.

Schmidt is the third and final co-defendant to plead guilty and be sentenced in an Aug. 30, 2005, federal indictment.

* **Brandon Sanders**, 27, of Raytown, was sentenced on Feb. 22, 2006, to three years of probation and ordered to pay \$19,301 in restitution. On Nov. 22, 2005, **Sanders** pleaded guilty to theft of government property. Between March and July 2003, Graves said, **Sanders** received 26 checks and money orders originally payable to the IRS, which were stolen from the IRS mail room by **Schmidt**. **Sanders**, who knew the checks and money orders had been stolen, deposited the checks into his bank account. **Sanders** kept some of the money and gave some of the money

to **Schmidt**, who is his sister. The total amount of checks or money orders that **Sanders** deposited or cashed was \$19,301.

* **Jeffrey Bookout**, 37, of Raymore, Mo., was sentenced on Feb. 24, 2006, to three years of probation and ordered to pay \$7,363 in restitution. On Nov. 22, 2005, **Bookout** pleaded guilty to theft of government property. **Bookout** admitted that he received checks and money orders originally payable to the IRS, which were stolen from the IRS mail room by **Schmidt**. **Bookout**, who knew the checks and money orders had been stolen, deposited the checks into his bank account. **Bookout** kept some of the money and gave some of the money to **Schmidt**. The total amount of checks or money orders that **Bookout** deposited or cashed was \$7,363.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney J. Daniel Stewart. It was investigated by the Department of Treasury, Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow